

CONTRADICTIONS.

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VOL. II.

CONTRADICTIONS

OR

Who could have thought it?

A NOVEL

FROM THE FRENCH



By the Author of 'The French Revolution' and 'The French Republic'.

LONDON:

Printed by

W. G. Smith

at No. 1, Pall Mall

PRINTED FOR HARRIS AND SONS

No. 47, Abchurch Lane, Piccadilly

1850

9822
CONTRADICTIONS;

OR,

Who could have thought it?

A NOVEL,

FROM THE FRENCH,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By JOHN HEMET.

“ Peter,” said I, “ I am afraid . . . ”

Peter never answered suppositions,
because

VOL. II.

London:

PRINTED FOR EARLE AND HEMET,

No. 47, Albermarle Street, Piccadilly.

1799

CONTRADICTIONS;

OR,

THE CONFLICT OF THOUGHTS IN

A NOVEL,

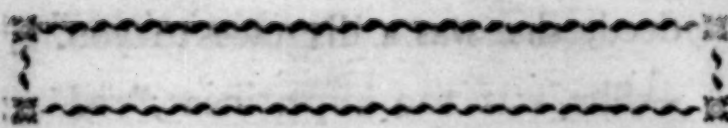
FROM THE FRENCH.



VOLUME II.

LONDON:

1850



CONTRADICTIONS.

Chap. I.

PROJECTS.

THE next day, I went to the young lady's according to her invitation of the preceding day.

“Well!” said she, “have you seen your lady?”

—“Yes; and we have fallen out with one another.”

—“Indeed? What, entirely?”

—“Yes, entirely.”

—“Ah! I am glad of it. In-

deed, she was a disgrace to you.
—She was too impertinent,” added she, “if I had dared to tell you”

“Ah!” replied I, laughing;
“you might have”

“No,” said she; “one cannot tell those things.”

I would not say that she misunderstood me. — She wished to know the cause of our quarrel—I had not forgot the day before—I would not tell her.

“What are you going to do now?” said she.

Then, she asked me whether that rupture caused me any very great affliction, and said many things of the same nature, all

tending to let me see that I might direct my views to her. She was a widow—I mention this, not that I had any thoughts of marrying her, or that I had any fixed determination upon the subject—the recollection of my last adventure was too painful and too recent, that I should be seduced by the hope that was held up to me. I resolved to allow myself a proper time to reflect, and endeavoured to behave myself in such a manner, as to avoid the least shadow of an engagement.

However, in the course of an hour, a sort of intimacy had taken place between us. In the evening,

when card parties were made up, it was I was called, in order to help her. 'This, said I to myself, cannot lead me to anything'—and I sat by her the whole evening. Before I went away, she begged I would come the next day, to accompany her to a walk—I promised I would—it would not have been easy to refuse—this promise had nothing of any consequence in itself. Nevertheless, as I went home, I reflected on all the steps I had taken, without any intention. By this, I saw how many more I might still be drawn into, whether I would or not. From this consideration, I was tempted

to embark with a good grace. When I came in, therefore, I said to Peter:

“Well! here is a new adventure I am engaged in—or very near.”

I thought the attachment of this faithful servant entitled him to my confidence. Peter bowed, as if to wish me joy. But, by-and-by, all the troubles attendant on an intrigue presenting themselves to my mind, I said to Peter:

“Provided this turn out like the other”

—“Thank God! Sir, you have got out of it very well.”

—“Yes, Peter; let me have again as much good luck, and I am completely ruined.”

“Ah! Sir,” replied Peter; “Providence is so great!”

He thought, most probably, that, considering the singularity of the case, the usual corrective could have no effect. But this was not more successful, and I went to bed, with an almost fixed determination to have nothing to do with the widow.

Next day, I saw her again. The fineness of the weather, and I know not what else, had lessened my resolution, and, in the course of our walk, it changed as many

times as my companion happened to turn her head, either to look at me, or to address others. The following days, parties of pleasure succeeded one another with an astonishing rapidity. I made one in all—I was not invited—it was enough to tell me. ‘This proves nothing,’ said I to myself, ‘and so far, thank God! I have taken no engagement’—The widow never failed to present me to every one of her acquaintances as a new visitor, and always with a nod, which seemed to say: ‘Why! we must forgive him’—by which I saw that the whole town had been busied and scandalized on my

account. 'Such a care,' thought I, 'demands from me nothing but a mere sentiment of gratitude.' She took me along with her to all the shops—I accompanied her in all her morning excursions—I fetched her from every house she was visiting at—I was her squire, her treasurer, her commissioner—but I had said nothing.—'therefore,' was I continually repeating to myself, 'there is nothing done.'

One morning, I went to her house—she was thoughtful—she bid me sit down.

"Do you know," said she, "that

every body in town says I am going to marry you?"

"What! without my consent?"
I was going to say.

"Not," continued she, "that I mean to say that it is so."

"Oh! all in good time!" thought I, coming a little to myself. She went on.

"But they say also that you have not entirely done with Charlotte."

Was I to have answered one way, or another? I hesitated—I did not answer—she went on:

"You must put a stop to such reports."

“Which way?” thought I, “at least she must point it out first”—

I remained silent—

“If you mean to continue your visits to me”

I was not quite certain of that—therefore, I still remained silent—

“You must go to Charlotte’s, and tell her positively that it is all over.”

I reflected a moment which of these two ways I should choose. The one shut the door—the other left it but half open. I determined in favor of the least decisive, and got up to go to Charlotte’s—

In my way, I considered that the widow was a good match—that, if I did but speak, I could marry her. ‘I shall take all my letters back,’ said I to myself; ‘and, if, in showing them to the widow, I were to ask the price of such a sacrifice?—How charming it would be to have obtained that triumph in eight days, and that, without having thought of it—without having entered into the smallest engagement?’ This idea gave me great pleasure—I felt myself almost determined——

Yet, my heart beat high, when I entered Charlotte’s chamber. She rose—and sat down again,,

without saying a word. She was a little pale, and I thought I saw her eyes red. I had come in, resolved not to sit down—but she made a sign with her hand—and I took a chair, in order to protract the time. She bent her eyes again upon her work—her countenance wore an air of dejection—I could not open my mouth—At last, I wanted to say :

“Miss Charlotte.”

But my tongue faltered on the first word, and I said :

“Charlotte,”—as usual.

I paused——

She looked at me, and said :

“No doubt, you come to tell

me, that you will not see me any more."

I got a little breath——

"It is so, Charlotte," said I.

"You may do what you please," replied she, with the utmost gentleness; "my situation makes me a dependant on you."

"No, Charlotte," said I, in order to remove that reproach, which became painful to me, "you have got another, who will supply the loss of me."

—"He has been gone a whole week, and I have never seen him since the day you left me. From that time," added she, shedding

some tears, "I have done nothing but weep."

—"Because he was gone?"

"No."

"But, Charlotte, how can I believe you, after what has passed?"

—"I was wrong : but I thought you would forgive a little coquetry."

—"How, Charlotte, coquetry! To admit him, at such an hour, into your room!"

—"Why, I was angry at you—he came—I let him come in, merely to vex you—the next day, I had not the courage to tell you. You may have seen," added she,

blushing, "that there was a light in the room; a proof, that he was not there to stay."

I, indeed, recollected that circumstance.

—"But," said I, "and the esplanade?"

—"The day before, it was with difficulty I could prevail upon him to leave my room; I had succeeded, only, by promising, that I would go and take a walk with him, on the following day. When he came back, I said I would not go; but he flew into such a passion, that I was afraid he would quarrel with you a second time. Had you condescended to hear

me a moment, I would have told you."

She fell a-crying—I did not know what to answer. I cast my eyes round the room—I saw all her things packed up—and, to say something, I asked—whether she was going to quit the house—

"Yes," said she; "the whole town is acquainted with my story: it has been related, with all its circumstances, to the landlady, who, after making a most terrible noise, has insisted upon my quitting the house instantly."

"How can that be?" I asked, a little confused.

"The young lady, whom you went to visit, though I had begged of you not to go, told her every thing, yesterday."

I rose from my seat—I was pacing the room, in the greatest agitation—

"I know not whither to go," said Charlotte, crying; "my father will not receive me, but upon one condition."

—"What condition, Charlotte?"

She gave me the letter—That condition was, that she should come back *married with me*. My head was quite giddy—I threw

down the letter, in a fit of despair—Charlotte began to sob aloud—

“They drive me away this evening,” said she; “I know not where to go to—I have no other resource left, but to throw myself into the river.”

She got up, and ran to the door. I stopped her—

“Charlotte,” said I, “compose yourself.”

—“What will you have me do, since you refuse to marry me?”

—“Charlotte, I did not say that.”

I did not know what I was about—

—“ Oh! it is your intention
—you no longer love me—let me
go.”—And she made an effort to
get away from my arms.

—“ Well! well! Charlotte, I
will marry you.”

Then, she gave over crying—
called me her tutelary angel—said
I had saved her life.—I had been
considering, likewise, that, if I
did not do that, I could not return
home, as nobody in town would
like to look at me—

“ Charlotte,” said I, “ this
place has been very unlucky to
me; and, though we cannot be
married to-morrow, it being quin-

fidi, nevertheless, we must set off immediately."

I wanted, besides, to avoid seeing again the widow. Charlotte gave her consent—only she told me, that, for the sake of decency, we must keep her arrival and our marriage secret, until she could go again to her father's. This was exactly what I wanted; but, as is always the case, when one has had some difficulty in taking a determination, I was in a hurry to have done, and, although there was no very great use for it, I went to fetch the clergyman who had refused to marry us, and desired him to perform upon us the ceremony

of betrothing—he consented, after making us promise, that we should not consider ourselves as married.—Indeed, neither of us had a mind to it—

I returned home, in order to prepare for my departure. I met Peter on the stairs—I durst not look at him—nor tell him of my new determination. I only bade him come up, because I was going to set off. Peter seldom showed any surprise—he began to pack up—

I was pacing the room—at last, I said to him: “Peter, I am going to marry Charlotte.”

Peter looked at me, and said nothing. My fate changed so often, that Peter had no longer any thing to say. Besides, he did not know whether he ought to address me a compliment or a consolation—and, to say the truth, the tone with which I had pronounced these words could not but leave him in uncertainty. I continued to walk across my chamber—now-and-then, I stopped, as if to listen to Peter, who, all the while, spoke not a single word. I would have given the world, to have got him to address me. At last, I said to him, striking with my fist on the chimney:

“ It must be confessed, that it is very extraordinary !”

It was not *that* I wanted to say — Peter understood it only in the literal sense---

“ This, sir, proves the truth of what I was saying, that all marriages are written in heaven.”

—“ And yet,” replied I, enraged at the turn he gave to my idea, “ I can break it, if I please.”

—“ Then, sir, it would be a proof, that it was *not* written there.”

It was, certainly, far from my intention to raise a theological dispute ; but those things will happen sometimes---

"Peter," replied I, "then it is written, or *not* written, just as I may choose to have it?"

"Certainly, sir, if God pleases."

I answered---Peter replied---and I set off in a state of mind pretty tranquil.

Chap. II.

ANOTHER DIGRESSION.

(I RANG the bell—Peter came up.

“How does my printer go on, Peter?”

—“He does not go on at all, sir. Laziness”

“Then carry the manuscript to another.”

.

I was forced to go out when the first sheet of this volume came, and told Peter to look it over himself.

On the second being brought :
“ Peter,” cried I, “ this is not like the preceding one—go, and get it altered.”

—“ It is printed off, sir.”

I was almost distracted. “ What title have I given to the volumes?”

—“ None yet, sir.”

I sat down—got up—paced the room to and fro—sat down again—mused for some time—

“ Then,” roared I, “ call it
CONTRADICTIONS!!!”)

*Chap. III.**AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.*

CHARLOTTE and I travelled in two separate coaches. In the evening, I arrived at my house. The next day, I went out, in order to divert my mind, and to see how I should be received by my acquaintances.

“Your marriage is broke off then?” said every one, as soon as I came in—

Then, without allowing me time to give an answer, a lady added, with a significant shrug:

“Indeed, you never could have done better.”

A young person assured me, that, a long while since, her mother had forbidden her to have any kind of connexion with miss Charlotte—and two young men, drawing me aside, gave me to understand that I had a very narrow escape. To all these I made no reply, but by a kind of gesticulation that had not the least meaning in it; and what seemed to me more disagreeable to withstand was, the idea of the foolish figure every

one should cut, when I should present them Charlotte as my wife.

I met a school-fellow of mine, who prevailed on me to take a walk with him. He conversed with me about my affairs—his own—told me he had a sister.

“A propos,” said he, your marriage is broke off.”

I made no answer.

—“I wish you joy.”

Then, he went on talking about his sister—said she was newly arrived from another Department.

“You have seen her?” asked he, “she came here eighteen months ago.”

I said I thought so, but did not exactly recollect.

"That I believe," said he laughing; "you were in love then, and I could not have mentioned it at that time; but *she* recollects it."

I looked at him, and he gave me to understand that his sister had taken a fancy to me. He afterwards told me that he a mind to take me on a visit to her, but that, after he had said so, he did not know whether it would be proper.

I felt a violent desire to see that person who had a partiality for me—It is a pleasure of vanity,

to which we are never indifferent, and my passion for Charlotte now left my heart sufficiently free, to feel that pleasure in its whole extent—I insisted very much, assuring him that he might rely upon me. I was on the point of confessing to him my position in regard to Charlotte—but something prevented me. He did not want much pressing, but required of me the most profound secret upon the confidence he had made me, giving me to understand how much his sister's delicacy would be hurt, if she knew that I was acquainted with it. I promised

an inviolable secrecy—and we went to his sister's.

As we went along, I endeavoured to recollect her features, and, before we had entered the house, I had been drawing twenty portraits of her—each different from the other—and all different from the original. She was a person about four-and-twenty, little, of a good *embonpoint*, and freshness of complexion. She was not by far so handsome as Charlotte, but I thought she had in her figure something of goodness and cheerfulness, which gave me more pleasure. I told her that I was very happy in having an opportunity of

renewing our acquaintance—she also was very glad of it—and I thought I could perceive, that she was more so, than she chose to say. Her brother threw a glance at me, which I understood very well. I trembled, lest Henrietta should perceive it---but she did not. He staid there the whole time my visit lasted. I thought he dreaded some indiscretion on my part.

Henrietta was at work---I was teasing her, by making fun of it. For, I have always remarked, that, whether a man have any design or not, the only way to begin an acquaintance with the ladies is, to

tease them, at first. This serves for ever, and in all cases—it is a ground of dispute, which, being once established, is brought upon the carpet, when one has nothing to say—or when one is going to begin saying something. I asked Henrietta, whether she had seen the esplanade, and other public walks?—she answered my questions with a charming cheerfulness, and we fell into a dispute about the town, which I maintained was prettier than hers, while she contended for the contrary, but always in good humour.

“Henrietta,” said the brother,
“is always a warm advocate for

the reputation of the town in which she was born."

"She is in the right," replied I, "and every body will be of her opinion."

She seemed much satisfied with this piece of gallantry; and, when I went away, her brother said to me:

"You have won the heart of Henrietta, most completely."

I reflected upon that, and on the pleasure I had enjoyed in her conversation—I much lamented, that I had not paid my addresses to her sooner than to Charlotte—I thought she would have suited me better. She possessed a good

nature, that charmed me—she did not make *phrases*—which I have ever had an aversion from, because phrases always confuse me, and I absolutely lose sight of what the person wanted to tell me at first; and, what had pleased me in Charlotte was, that, notwithstanding all her wit, she always gave natural answers to what was said; though, to speak the truth, rather less so, than Henrietta.

I went to Charlotte's; and, during the conversation, I remarked, several times, that I was inattentive to what she said—and even scarcely knew what I said myself. I had nothing in my head, but the

words, and the sweet sound of Henrietta's voice. — I, suddenly, took my determination, and said:

“ These delays are productive of nothing but mischief; I am going to speak to the Municipal Officer, and try if we can be married to-morrow.”

I had been thinking, that, if I did not marry, I could not help going to see Henrietta the next day, as she had given me a very pressing invitation—that I should go, without telling her that I was about to be married—that her partiality for me might possibly increase—and mine also—for, I felt that I began to have some. Not

that I am very susceptible—many causes had contributed to raise my passion for Charlotte—and the reader has seen that I had felt none for the widow. Be that as it may, I reflected that Henrietta and her brother might accuse me of having deceived them. Besides, I did not find in me so much philosophy as in the morning, about what I should endure—I wanted to put a stop to all farther talk on the subject. I, therefore, said to Charlotte the words I have mentioned before, and she replied :

“ Oh ! he will not do it.”

I could not tell, at the moment, whether it was fear, or desire, that

had dictated her answer—I went to the Municipal Officer—I found him at home.

“Well!” said his wife, “you ought to return thanks to my husband; had it not been for him, you would have done a fine piece of business!”

“It is not I,” said the Municipal Officer; “it is the law.”

“Yes,” replied I, “all that I am indebted to it for, is, that I am still *to be* married.”

I told him the purport of my visit—he gave me the same answer he had on the first day—I flew into a passion—his wife grew angry—I did not measure my expressions

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—and we parted sworn enemies. I returned to Charlotte's—I told her I had not been able to succeed—she shrugged up her shoulders—and I went home.

“Peter,” said I, “I should like to know whether my marriage be written in heaven?”

“That you shall know, sir,” answered Peter.

“It will be high time Peter!” cried I, — and immediately the thought of Henrietta recurred to my mind—or rather, *bad* recurred, when I made that remark.

“Peter,” said I, “what would become of me, if I were in love with another?”

"God, sir, is so good," answered Peter, "that he would grant you fortitude sufficient to remain true to Miss Charlotte."

"Peter," said I, peevishly, "we must suppose, that it is, likewise, in his power to grant me still greater favors."

"Who knows, sir?" replied Peter—and I fell into a profound reverie——

I thought of the past—it presented nothing that could satisfy me. Without even wishing it, I returned to the present---I could not find many charms in it. Yet, I had not the courage to lament the whimsical assemblage of cir-

cumstances, which had brought me to the knowledge of a thing so fatal to my repose---the passion of that Henrietta, whom I should never have known, under that point of view, had not heaven taken care to consecrate for me, in a particular manner, the different days of the new calendar.

*Chap. IV.**VISITS.*

THE next day, I went again to Henrietta's—she was still more charming than the day before. I had been walking a great deal—she went herself to fetch me one of her own pocket-handkerchiefs, because I had forgot to take mine—she touched my hand, to know whether I was warm—and all this without any intended design. Not that she was so very innocent—for,

she was four-and-twenty—but she never meant any harm. Her brother was not there; but, when he came home, it was all the same—She seemed nowise disconcerted by his presence.

We were playing tricks with one another—she pretended that I had undone the frame on which she was working, and made me promise to come the next day, to assist her in putting it to rights. Her brother made the observation that perhaps it would give me too much trouble.

“Oh! that is true,” said she, blushing deeply—and I had not

the courage to answer, as her brother had supposed.

As I came out, I met my rival—this displeased me—I did not know he was come back to town. However, I observed that he did not take the way to Charlotte's house, and that he was not coming from it. Charlotte whom I went to visit, told me she had not seen him—After this question and the answer to it, I could not find any thing more to say—I put my hat and stick upon the table—then, carried them to the corner of the room—then sat down again. Afterwards I asked how many days we had till decadi.

"Four," answered she.

"So then," replied I, after reflecting a moment, "this is sextidi—And that Municipal Officer," continued I, "would not marry us?—That is very extraordinary!"

"Yes," said Charlotte, "very ridiculous"——

The conversation dropped—
Presently I exclaimed, as if by inspiration:

"I would lay any thing that this delay will occasion some other accident"

"I hope not," said Charlotte—
I thought she spoke it quite natural. I left her in about an

hour—and, in the afternoon, I went to set up Henrietta's frame. She gave me several taps on the fingers, because, said she, I was spoiling the work. She spoke of my rival—said he had been at her house—I did not like this, though I cannot tell why—To be sure, Henrietta and my rivalry had not the least connexion—yet, I was not pleased. Henrietta probably perceived it; for, she instantly told me he was going to set off for the West Indies. I was much affected at such a testimony of her friendship for me—this increased my regret. Every moment, I was ready to say to

her: 'Henrietta, how unhappy it is that I am obliged to marry!'— But this might have been attended with serious consequences—I, therefore, contained myself.

Chap. V.

A NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

It was exactly nine o'clock, the next day, when I arrived at the house where Charlotte lived.—The shutters were shut—I wondered at that. I stepped in—and found nobody. I went up to her chamber—the door was open—Charlotte was not there—I ran all over the house---it seemed quite deserted. At last, I saw in

a corner, a little boy, who burst into tears as soon as I approached. A cold sweat ran all over me—I really thought Charlotte had been murdered!—This idea occasioned a total revolution in my whole being—and I instantly thought of the consequences of this event.—But it was not that. The little boy told me, crying and sobbing, that the day before, after I had left the house, a gentleman had come into Miss Charlotte's room—that they had remained a great while together—that, sometimes, they had spoken very loud—and that it was thought Miss Charlotte had been crying—though they

were not certain of it—that, afterwards, she had come down to the street door—probably to see him out, as she was without either a shawl or a bonnet—and, that she had not been seen since.

I stood quite stupified——

—“She did cry?” I asked.

—“They think so.”

—“But did she not call?”

—“They did not hear any thing.”

I was in a state of mind not to be described. At last, it occurred to me that I ought to run after Charlotte. I cannot tell why the thought did occur—I am only relating a fact.

I told Peter of this new circumstance. He was going to gesticulate his astonishment — but he checked himself --- saddled our horses, without saying a word — and we set off.

We rode full gallop. When Peter had a little recovered himself from his surprise, he said to me :

“ You will confess, however, sir, that we are very fortunate, in having met with so fine a road.”

“ Peter,” said I, in my turn, “ this is not the effect of good fortune, but of choice. I might as well have taken another.”

—“Why, then, you do not know where Miss Charlotte is?”

—“No more than you, Peter” and I stopped, in order to reflect.

—“Peter,” continued I, “here are three roads.”

—“Beside the one to the city,” said Peter.

—“Very true,” replied I; “for, it is not impossible but she may still be there.—Peter,” continued I, after musing some time, “whither shall we go?”

—“Whither God shall conduct us,” said Peter.

—“Peter,” said I, peevishly, “has God any thing to do with that?”

—“No doubt of it, sir.”

“Then, Peter,” cried I, “he conducted Charlotte?”

“Ah! sir,” answered Peter, “who can guess the ways of Providence?”

“Peter,” said I, “this is the very reason that I am at a loss to know which road I am to take”—and I directed my horse towards an inn, which I saw at a distance.

I now began to rally my spirits, and to debate within myself whether it was absolutely necessary that I should thus hunt, as it were, after Charlotte. But 'twas all in vain, I could not satisfy myself about that—and my want

of determination did not proceed, as is generally the case, from any abundance of direct and cross arguments *upon* the subject of debate, but rather from my total inability to bring any argument at all, either *for* or *against* the question. I do not know whether I make myself understood ; but such, exactly, was the situation I found myself in, at the moment.

While I was endeavouring to shake off this kind of torpor, I arrived at the inn. I had hardly put my first question, when a man, who was on the point of mounting his horse, came up to me,

with an air of the greatest eagerness——

“ Oh! I know, I know,” said he, with a provincial accent, “ I have seen them.”

“ No!” answered, at once, all the people of the inn.

“ Yes, yes,” continued he, turning round, “ Sir,” said he to me, “ a gentleman and a lady, is it not?”

“ Yes,” said I, rather dissatisfied.

——“ In a carriage?”

——“ I cannot tell.”

——“ Well! I have seen them, as I see you now——”

"Pray, sir," said I, interrupting him, with precipitation, "how did the lady look? was she very sad?"

"Why!" replied he, after musing some time, "she did not seem to be very cheerful."

"That's the very thing," said I, endeavouring to suppress a sigh — "I knew it."

The people at the inn wanted to speak —

—"No, no; I know very well what the gentleman means."

They said nothing, and went away, shrugging up their shoulders. 'It is very strange,' thought

I, & how some people want to make themselves necessary !

“ I shall go with you,” said the stranger, who, by this time, had got upon his horse—and, preventing the thanks I was going to return him for his polite offer, “ No,” said he, ; “ I ride for the sake of my health ; one way is as good for me as another.—There is no occasion for you to take your servant” —and, before I had made an answer, he had already told Peter to go back, and was at the gate waiting for me. Peter came up to me, frightened at seeing me set off alone with a stranger.

"Peter," answered I, "it is broad day; I have nothing to fear."

"Oh! but, Sir," replied Peter, "you are too incautious."

With a sharp sounding cut of my whip, I made my horse prance and caracole two or three times, and not for the world would I have suffered Peter to accompany me. I rode up to my conductor, who, on his part, had been wheeling about above a dozen times before the inn.

"Your meeting with me was a very lucky circumstance," said he—and I set off, endeavouring

to reconcile myself with my good luck.

As we rode on, I was afraid he would ask me what kind of business I could have with the persons I was pursuing with so much eagerness; but he did not even so much as think of it. He only spoke of himself—he did not even care whether I listened or not. He told me, that he had been captain of a ship, and had been obliged to quit the sea, on account of his health. I looked at him, and, to be sure, he was very thin and lank; but his horse had, at least, as sorry an appearance as

himself.—He told me, that, one day, the whole of the crew had mutinied against him.

—“But, Sir, I say *the whole*; not one was there left on my side. When I saw this, I took a hatchet, and threw it at one of the ring-leaders. Sir, it fell on his forehead, and fairly split him down to his breast.”

“Sir,” said I, emerging from a deep reverie, “that man was very lucky, that you missed him.”

“Oh!” I warrant you,” answered he; “with such a violence had I aimed the blow, that he certainly never would have recovered”—and he went on with his story.

~~—~~ This I only recollected afterwards.

He was just concluding the relation of his voyages, when, after four leagues of tedious riding, he suddenly exclaimed, in a transport of joy:

“There they are!”—and showed me a post-chaise, in a courtyard. We went in—

I cannot say but, at this moment, I thought it rather hard, that I should be forced to have a second affair with my rival, for the sake of Charlotte, whom I would, very willingly, have left to him, and who, perhaps, would not have been averse from that arrange-

ment—at this moment, I could have laid down my whole fortune, that she had gone away without the least reluctance. ‘Thus, said I, (for, I no longer entertained the least doubt about it) ‘we shall quarrel for the sake of honor, though with all the desire, and all possible means, of being friends.’

However, I had no choice left, and I asked whether I might speak to the lady who had arrived in the post-chaise. I was introduced—I found a lady of about sixty, sitting by a gentleman of eighty. I thought I had mistaken the room, and hurried out again with precipitation. The lady got up, and fol-

lowed me, to know what I wanted
—I ran down into the yard—she
looked through the window—my
companion made her a bow—

“That is the lady,” said he:
“have you already done?”

“Why!” replied I, quite con-
founded; “the one I am in search
is, is not twenty!”

—“The devil, she is not! why
did you not tell me so before?—
I would lay any thing,” continued
he, after musing awhile, “that it
was the carriage which passed
through here at twelve o’clock,
last night—*this* passed, only *this*
morning.”

"The devil, it did!" replied I.

"Why did you not tell me so before?"

"Well, well!" said he; "it does not signify much; you have not above six leagues to ride, to get into the road which they have taken. If you choose, I shall accompany you half way,"

I thanked him——

"Well?" continued he, "you have only to turn to your left; and, if you should not be able to ride well in the cross road, you have only to take your horse by the bridle; and, after a little league, you will come to the high road."

"So-that," said I, "it will be only seven."

—"Exactly so, Sir. I am very happy that I had it in my power to be of some service to you."

He then bowed, and rode off—then, coming back again, he cried out:

"Do not go and mistake a second time—it is on your left you must turn."

*Chap. VI.***BOTH SIDES OF THE QUESTION.**

I FOUND myself in the greatest perplexity. I had not even Peter with me, to tell him of my irresolutions—which is a very desirable relief, in a moment of trouble. The worst of it was, I must determine one way or another.

‘I cannot,’ said I, ‘stay for ever in this inn. I am not one of those who do, by choice, things uncomfortable and out of the com-

mon way. I like order, and do not choose to deviate from my usual mode of life.'

All these considerations might have determined me; but, when I was going to take my resolution, my head grew quite giddy. At last, I said to myself: 'Let us go back to Peter; for, besides, I cannot travel without him.'

I set off again—Peter had left the inn. I returned to town, and went home—there I found him. He was, at first, transported to see me, so great had been his apprehension for my safety: afterwards, he enquired after Charlotte.

"Peter," said I, "she is . . ."

I paused—I did not know what I meant to say.

"Where, Sir?" asked he.

—"Where she was, Peter."

"God be thanked!" said Peter, fetching a deep sigh.

I really think, that he was afraid she had thrown herself into the river. I related to him my adventure, and afterwards said:

"Now, Peter, I should like to know, whether she went away of her own accord, or not."

"'Tis hard to say," answered Peter.

—"Whether, by running after

her, I should please or displease her."

"That," replied Peter, after musing a considerable time, "is equally difficult to guess at."

"And especially," added I, "whether I should still be in time."

Peter hung down his head, and bent his shoulders—

"Peter," cried I, "one thing, however, I am certain of; that it is too late to set off to-day."

Peter left the room, and I sat down by the table. I, then, began to reason in this manner: 'Either I should, still, be in time, or I

should not. If I should be in time, it is a proof that she was willing to go: for, if she have been carried away by force, it is certain that she is in the power of a man who makes use of violent measures—and, supposing that to be the case, it is but natural to think that he’

‘Poor Charlotte!’ said I, fetching a sigh—‘Well!’ added I, after a pause, ‘he must marry her, however—there is no doubt about that.’

I went to bed; and, whether through fatigue, or through some other cause, I slept infinitely bet-

ter than I had done for a long time past.

I had forgot to mention, that, in the morning, I had called at my rival's, and was informed that he had set off the preceding night, and, as they thought, for the East Indies. On the other hand, my father-in-law, at whose house I had also called, in order to acquaint him with the accident which had happened to his daughter, had died, three hours before, of a fit of apoplexy. My head had been so full of different things, in the course of the day, that this news made very little impression upon me. Besides, I knew but little of

my future father-in-law—and my mind was intirely absorbed in reflections upon the astonishing variety of effects which may be produced by one and the same cause. For instance, that cause, viz. the obstinacy of the Municipal Officer, which had put me into so perplexing a dilemma on the quintidi, had just released me out of it on the sextidi. Had it not been for that, it is very certain that Charlotte would have been my wife the preceding day—and one may very well imagine, that I found myself amply compensated, by the liberty I was now at, of paying my addresses to the lovely Henrietta.

Chap. VII.

THE DECLARATION.

In my way to Henrietta's house, I asked myself, whether I should say any thing about my excursion of the preceding day. But this I thought totally unnecessary, as Henrietta did not know that I was upon the point of marrying Charlotte; and as such a confidence might only give rise to scruple and uneasiness. I, also, reflected,

that, by this time, the fate of Charlotte was, probably, decided; perhaps even, that she had taken her determination—which, in fact, appeared to me the most reasonable.

As I was indulging these reflections, I thought I felt the air sweeter, and I walked with greater agility. With radiant looks, I entered Henrietta's apartment. I found her a little dejected, which was owing, at least, I thought so, to my not having paid her a visit, the day before, according to my promise. I say, that *I thought so*, because she did not mention any thing about it: she did not even

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seem displeased—only she did not look quite so lively as usual. She did not enquire where I had been the day before—only when, as we were joking upon some subject or other, which I have now forgot, I wanted to persuade her something that was not true, she answered :

“ You may persuade me whatever you please. I do not go out—I see nobody—I know nothing of what passes in town—it is very easy to deceive me.”

All this she said with an air so very affecting, that I was tempted to make her a complete confession—but I checked myself, for

fear of giving her pain. In short, I staid a long while with her, and by dint of attentions, succeeded in restoring her usual cheerfulness. As I was going away, I asked leave to come the next day——

“But,” said she, blushing, “perhaps that may be too much trouble for you.”

I expressed some displeasure at this reflection, and, when I left her, she suffered me to kiss her hand, which, however, she made some effort to keep back. I came home, by far more happy than I had been during the whole course of my life, not even excepting the

time when I was paying my addresses to Charlotte.

I saw Henrietta every day, and, every day, I became more enamoured of her. She was not like Charlotte, in whose presence I was in continual trembling, for fear she should make a jest of me, a thing which I must confess I am not very fond of; and I dare say every body is pretty much like me in that respect; for, if some people endeavour to appear not to care about it, it is only a *finesse*, to prevent the jest from being carried still farther. For my part, I never make this reflection, but begin immediately to be angry;

and this had produced between Charlotte and me several quarrels, some of which had lasted two whole days!

But, with Henrietta, it was far otherwise, and, during three whole weeks, we had not had one single quarrel, though we had said many of those things which are understood at half a word, and which generally give rise to many wranglings between lovers—I say *lovers*, although we had not as yet mentioned any thing of the kind to one another. But *I* was in love, and I thought I could read the same sentiment in the eyes of Henrietta—Besides, what I had

been told by her brother left me not the least doubt on the subject.

Charlotte had now been gone about three weeks. I said to Peter :

“ Peter, it seems as if Charlotte had quite forgot me.”

“ Fortunately, Sir,” replied Peter, in all the simplicity of his heart, “ you have borne her absence with very great fortitude.”

I blushed at my thus deceiving that honest fellow——

“ Peter,” said I, “ to speak the truth, I have very soon got over it, and am now very much tempted to marry another.”

“Miss Henrietta?” said Peter;
“the whole town speaks of it.”

“Then,” said I to myself, “it
is high time for me to *think* of it”
—and I began to consider in what
manner I should make my declaration.
This is the most perplexing thing I know. It was the
first I had ever made; for, one
may recollect that, with the widow,
I had never gone so far— —With
regard to Charlotte, I had asked
her in marriage, and thus my sentiments
had been expressed at
once, without my being obliged
to address myself directly to her,
and to inform her of the state of
my heart. I was in the greatest

perplexity, and, as is always the case, the more I thought of it, the more my ideas became confused, instead of becoming clearer.

I know not whether every body is like me; but, when I have been reflecting a long time upon a subject highly interesting to me, when the difficulty which I find in bringing it to an issue has obliged me to turn it and sift it a number of ways, I then, grow cool and indifferent, and no longer set any value upon that very thing upon which, but a moment before, I thought I could not set too great an one. It is a fact, that, at that very instant, I felt a much less desire of marrying

Henrietta, and I should have been almost tempted to give it up, in order to avoid the trouble of making a declaration. 'In fact,' said I to myself, 'Henrietta is a very bad match, and that is what I had never thought of before.'—I wanted something to divert me —

"Peter," said I, "a third love-affair—God grant it may succeed better than the other two!"

"Ah! Sir," said Peter; "human events are so uncertain!"

I did not relish this answer—there was now no possibility to think of my declaration, and therefore, waited till an opportunity should

offer. But, waiting for an opportunity is the same as seeking for it—the whole day elapsed, without my being able to find it.

The next day, I was with Henrietta—she was saying to me how miserable she had been made by her mother——

“But,” said I, “her ill-treatments ought to have inspired you with a desire of being married.”

“No,” replied she; “you know very well that I was to have taken the veil; but the revolution has prevented me.”

“And” said I, drawing my seat closer, “were you sorry for your disappointment?”

"Very much," answered she, quite in a natural tone; "and when we renewed our acquaintance, I had just been missing an opportunity of going into a convent in Spain, which has caused me a great deal of vexation."

I was petrified at this answer—

"Yet," said I, not a little confused, "your brother had given me to understand that, much about the same time somebody"

Henrietta looked at me—at last, she replied, with a blush:

"I always thought as much—but, now," continued she, "you must not be angry at my brother."

"So, then," said I, in the utmost consternation, "you had no liking to me?"

"No," answered she, casting down her eyes—then, a moment after, she added, with the sweetest smile: "but I have taken some."

It is easy to judge of my transports. Nothing is so pleasing as the hours which follow a first avowal. We have so many things to speak of! What we have felt—what one wanted to make the other believe—what we have concealed—what we have guessed! We spent half of that day in each other's company; and agreed, that we

should marry as soon as possible. I did not want to lose any time, and, therefore, every thing was ready against the sextidi.

In the afternoon, I was with Henrietta, and I was saying to her :

“ Now, if it had not been for this new arrangement, every thing would have been done ; at this moment, you would be my wife—whereas we must wait three days.”

—“ Very true,” replied she ; “ but what is delayed, is not lost.”

At this instant, I thought I heard the voice of Peter, whispering in my ear : ‘ Who knows, Sir ? ’ This circumstance might have ap-

peared to me quite natural, considering how much I was used to this phrase ; but what is very singular, is, that, when I mentioned it to Henrietta, some little time after, she instantly recollected that she herself had heard the same words, although she did not pay any attention to them at the time. I am not relating this to prove that there are ghosts or miracles, but merely as a thing which is very extraordinary, and the truth of which I can avouch.

Chap. VIII.

THE BOAT.

IN the afternoon, I proposed to Henrietta, to go and take a walk. We had the river just at the farther end of the garden.

“We shall get into the boat,” said I to her, “and Peter shall row us.”

Henrietta made no answer—I repeated the words.

"I heard you very well," said she; and again was silent. I intreated her to speak.

"Why!" said she, at last, "I do not know whether that can be done."

—"Why not?"

"I cannot tell; but it seems to me that it cannot be done."

—"Why so, Henrietta, if there be no harm in it?"

"Very true," said she, "after musing some time, "there is no harm in that"—and she laid hold of my arm, in order to descend the steps. When we had gone half way, she stopped, and said to me :

"Really, I think we had better not go."

"Why so," repeated I, "if there be no harm in it?"

"You are right," said she; "though"

I continued to bring her along: when we came to the river, she made some difficulties—

"My heart tells me that I ought to go back," said she—but, before I had made an answer, she was already in the boat.

For some moments, she seemed to be pretty easy; but, when we began to lose sight of her garden, she said that we were going too far, and we ought to return; and,

as I wanted to oppose her, she added, with some warmth, that she had always been very sure that party would be productive of no good to her. I grew angry—then, in order to appease me, she consented that we should go on—and I, willing to please her, ordered Peter to return. Henrietta was glad of it—she gently pressed my hand, and I felt ashamed at the little pain I had given her.

Henrietta, always attentive to every thing which could give me pleasure, and, knowing how much I was attached to Peter, looked at him for some time; then, leaning on my shoulder, said:

“How well he does row!”

“No wonder,” said I, “he has been a boatman.”

—“Indeed!”

—“He has even been of several trades; for, he was a soldier once.”

She then crept along one of the benches that was in the boat, and addressing Peter, with a most enchanting sweetness, said:

“So, you have been in the army, Peter?”

“Yes, Miss, thank God!” answered Peter, without stopping.

—“And why did you quit it, Peter?”

—“Because, thank God! I have found a better situation.”

“He is always satisfied,” said Henrietta, turning to me, with a smile. “Then, Peter,” continued she, “you would be unhappy, were you to become again a soldier!”

—“Who knows, Miss?”

—“You could then find in your heart to quit your master?”

—“Thank God! Miss; my master never spoke to me about that.”

“Nor ever will, Peter, I assure you: what Henrietta said was only in jest.”

“Peter,” said Henrietta, sensibly affected, “after our marriage, I will have you to be with me as you are with your master.”

Then, without giving him time to reply, because she thought, as she said to me afterwards, that he was more attached to Charlotte than to her—but in this, she was mistaken; for, on being told that I was going to marry Henrietta, he had said to me:

“Admire, Sir, the goodness of Providence, that has no sooner taken away one thing, than it is immediately replaced.”

"Peter," had I answered, "and my aunt's estate?"

"Sir," answered Peter, "Providence, in it's mercy, has given you fortitude sufficient to enable you to do without it."

—"Why, Peter, it could not be otherwise."

—"Well, Sir, you have always got that."

But it is not of my aunt's estate that we are now speaking.—Henrietta, then, continued; and, addressing herself to Peter, asked him:

"Why did you go into the army, Peter?"

—“Oh! Miss, that would make a very long story.”

“Never mind,” said she.

“Peter,” said I, “I shall hold the oars”—I took Peter’s place, and he began thus:

“My father, by the grace of God, was a boatman.”

“Why, Peter,” said Henrietta, “you had a liking to the craft.”

—“That, or any other business, Miss: God well knows what is good for us. However, I had a mind to be a soldier; my father had been in the army, and had received three wounds which, most part of the time, would not allow him to quit his bed. Then, he

used to talk about wars, and sieges, and battles, and all that stirred up my blood."

—"What, Peter! even your father's wounds."

—"He might have died a hundred times, and God could favor me as much as he had favored him."

"That was not difficult," said Henrietta.

"Who knows, Miss?"—He then went on—

"My father had only been in one battle; but he had more stories to relate than those who had been in the wars all their lifetime—we were never weary of listening."

—“He had other children, then?”

—“Three boys and a girl, God be thanked! The eldest went to sea at sixteen, and we do not know what is become of him. As for my sister, she was born a cripple, and we found means to get her a place at the hospital.”

—“And the third?”

“The third,” said I, “was a bad one—was he not sent to the gallies, where he died?”

“Sir,” answered Peter, “he had been told that he would one day come to the gallows.”

—“And you, Peter?”

—“And I, Sir, fell in love.”

“Aye, Peter!” said Henrietta;
“and with whom?”

—“With the daughter of our
next neighbour.”

—“She was handsome, I suppose.”

Peter made a bow. *I* would not
have pressed him any farther; but
women have an insatiable curiosity
upon this.

“Peter,” said Henrietta, “what
kind of a face had she?”

“Why, Miss,” returned Peter,
after musing some little time, “it
was not one of those faces
which”

I perceived his embarrassment,
and wishing to relieve him from it,

"Peter," said I, "you were pleased with it, and that is every thing."

"Oh! certainly," replied Henrietta—"but she was, then, very amiable?"

I could not help smiling. In matters of love, Henrietta took every thing in its literal sense—nothing could redound more to her praise. However, I concealed the cause of my smile—it expressed what cannot be said to one's mistress. Peter answered:

"I thought her so—in the first place, Miss, she was not a coquette"—

—“ Ah ! I believe it, Peter ; no man can be mad enough to be in love with a coquette.”

—“ In the first place,” said I, addressing myself to Peter, with some kind of displeasure, “ we should know what is meant by a coquette ?”

“ Sir, you know that better than I do,” answered Peter, with a most respectful bow. I did not feel any wise disposed to give him the information he was in want of, when Henrietta exclaimed, with the tone of indignation :

—“ A coquette cannot love any body.”

It would be difficult for me to say how much I felt shocked at this expression. A man may bear the idea of having been left, even the first, by a mistress, who is become indifferent; but never will he suffer any one to say, that she has not loved him, even for a moment.

"Henrietta," replied I, "say that she cannot love long."

"Well!" said she, "is not that the same thing?"

The same reflection which I had just made, now recurred to my mind, and Henrietta's principle did but afford me a new motive for giving her the entire

possession of my heart. I pressed her hand—Peter went on:

“ Besides, Miss, she was an excellent good soul.”

“ Was she ? ” said Henrietta.

“ She was religious, I suppose, Peter ? ”

—“ Certainly, Miss ; but, however, not like a nun.”

—“ Like a nun ! ” said Henrietta, blushing : “ Why so, Peter ? ”

—“ In the first place, Miss, I should not have found my account in that.”

“ Why, Peter,” hastily interrupted Henrietta, “ that would

not have hindered her from loving you!"

—"When we say a nun, Miss, we mean a person who thinks of nobody else but God."

"But, when she is *not* a nun, Peter?" said Henrietta, in a tremulous voice.

I wanted to interfere, but this was a case of conscience. Peter gravely replied :

"Whoever, Miss, thinks like a nun, and acts like the world, commits a great sin."

Henrietta hung down her head.

"I did not think" said she, in a smothered voice.

I darted a look of indignation on Peter ; but, he did not understand what I meant—he knew not what Henrietta's former vocation had been.

“ Henrietta !” said I, laying hold of her hand. It was some time before she could answer. At last, she suddenly raised her eyes—they were still suffused with tears—mine expressed the greatest uneasiness——

“ No, no ;” said she, with some warmth, “ I have received no prohibition of that kind.”

I began to breathe——

“ Peter,” continued she, with

the sweetest smile, "go on with your story."

Peter was afraid to proceed—Henrietta encouraged him, and he went on :

"My father's neighbours frequently came to hear him speak of his wars. The young girl I have mentioned, also, came one evening, and sat down by the fire-side. She staid, as though she had a great many things to say; but the truth is, that she spoke, merely to have an opportunity to stay. My father related his war-like feats, and, in the mean time, she now and then played me some tricks. I answered them, though

with as little noise as possible, for fear of interrupting my father—but this added still more charms to them. When she went out, I could feel that she had remained in my head.”

—“What, Peter? had you not thought of that before?”

—“No, Miss; but, from that moment, it came all at once—and, the very next day, I began to be tired of my father’s wars, so that I once begged of him to relate to me the history of his amours.”

with as little noise as possible
for fear of interrupting my father
—but this added still more charms

Chap. IX.

could feel that she had remained

A NARROW ESCAPE.

in my presence. I had not

—What had you not

At this moment, Henrietta put
her hand upon mine. I gave her
a kiss—she leaned back, but it
was too late. However, she lean-
ed so much, that I was afraid she
should fall, I wanted to hold her
—she struggled, and her motion
made the boat lean on one side.
She was frightened—I wanted to

get up, but I staggered. I know not how it happened, but, with the end of the oar, I received a blow on my head, which made me step back, and sent my hat upon the bank. The motion was communicated to the boat——

“Thank God!” said Peter, “my master’s hat is safe”—and the boat overset——

We touched the bottom—and instantly got up—the river was so narrow in that part, and so little rapid, that we got out without the least difficulty.

“God be thanked!” said Peter, “had it not been in the wa-

ter, we should have hurt ourselves most terribly."

Henrietta had been frightened, but she soon recovered—and, as her wet clothes were extremely heavy, she laid hold of my arm, in order to regain her house, from which we were not far distant. We could hardly think of continuing our walk—I, therefore, complained of this accident, which had put a stop to it——

"Thank God!" cried Peter, we shall be in, before the rain comes."

We really felt a few drops, and had scarcely entered the

house, when it rained as fast as it could pour.

"How wet we should have been!" exclaimed Peter, turning towards the door, with inexpressible satisfaction.

Chap. X.

THE RECITAL.

I WENT home to change my clothes, and, when I came back, I found Henrietta with a lady whom I did not recollect, at first, so little did I suspect her being so near — It was — Charlotte !!! She had come directly to Henrietta's, as they had formerly been in the same convent. She came up to me — made me some re-

proaches—and spoke of our engagements.

“No,” said I to Henrietta, “we were only betrothed.”

“Betrothed!” cried she, changing color. Henrietta, in consequence of her education, attached a deal of importance to all the ceremonies of the church. “You had not told me that,” continued she, with the accent of sorrow. Charlotte went on:

“And we were to have been married three days after that in which I had the misfortune....”

She stopped, unable to proceed. Henrietta’s look spoke a still deeper sorrow—I was distracted,

"Charlotte," said I, "you bore your misfortune with very great patience, I think—a whole month!"

—"And I should bear it still, if I had waited for you, to put an end to it."

"You were very unhappy?" said the lovely Henrietta.

Charlotte raised her eyes to heaven—I was tempted to say, like Peter: 'That is rather difficult to guess at.'

"Charlotte," said I, "you would have saved yourself a great deal of trouble, if you had not admitted my rival."

—“How did I know that he would come?”

—“Or if you had not been so very officious in conducting him to the door.”

—“Yes, to be sure; that he might have staid in the house, without my knowing it.”

“Why then,” replied I, rather out of humor, “he must have been very resolute!”

“You have seen it,” returned Charlotte, angrily.

“That being the case,” said I coolly, “I now see, Charlotte, that the best thing you could do was to marry him.”

"Ungrateful man!" cried Charlotte.

Henrietta wanted to interfere—

"Will you relate," said she, "what has happened?"

"Certainly," said Charlotte.

"As soon as I was on the outside of the door, three men laid hold of me, and carried me away with main force——"

"And in those cases," interrupted Henrietta, "the sudden shock will prevent one's crying out."

"Why!" replied Charlotte, "how could I?—they had muffled up my head in a large hood! In this manner they carried me to the

end of the street—they put me into a post chaise—my ravisher sat by me, and we sat off full gallop.”

“Always with the hood about your head?” asked Henrietta.

—“No; they had taken it off. After travelling all night”

“What!” interrupted I “did you say nothing to him all that time?”

—“Yes, indeed; I loaded him with invectives, and asked him, in a haughty tone, what was his intention. He said he wished to take me from a man who did not deserve me.”

—“ And what did you say to that ?”

—“ Nothing ; I had taken the determination not to open my mouth, as long as I should remain in his power. The next day, he would make me eat, but I obstinately refused. At last, after travelling a night and a day, we stopped.”

“ What !” cried I, “ for the first time ?”

—“ Yes, for the first time. We alighted before a ready-furnished house——”

“ Ah ! now I begin to breathe,” said Henrietta ; “ it is from there,

I suppose, you found means to make your escape."

—"No, no; when I say a furnished house, I mean a house in the country, which he had taken."

—"On purpose?"

—"Yes, on purpose: he told me, afterwards, that he gave a hundred crowns for it."

"Why, Charlotte," said I, "you had then abandoned the resolution which you had taken at first, not to speak to him?"

—"No; he told me so; but I made him no answer. On the evening of our arrival, he conducted me to my apartment, and

gave me, for a servant, an old woman of a most frightful figure."

—" And did he say nothing to you?"

—" He bade me good night."

—" Was that all?"

—" He added, that he was going to leave me to rest; but I would not go to bed, for fear of any surprise."

" But that was wrong, Charlotte," cried I; " he behaved himself so respectfully."

" No matter," said Henrietta; " it was better so."

" Two days after, . . ." continued Charlotte—

" But the *next* day?" said I.

—"The next day, he stood continually at my door; but it was bolted, so that he could not open it; and I staid up the whole night, for fear he should force it open. The next morning, breakfast was brought up to me; but I still refused to open the door—"

"But, Charlotte," interrupted I, "mind that this was the third day which you had passed, without either eating or sleeping."

"Very true," said she; "and therefore, he was so alarmed, that he conjured me to open the door, promising that he would not enter. At last, after two hours' supplica-

tions, I consented to eat something."

"You must have come to that at last," said Henrietta.

—"I opened the door—"

—"And did he keep his word?"

"Yes, he did; but, the same evening, he came up to me. I threatened to kill me, and he retired. Several days passed in the same manner, and I once attempted to throw myself out of the window. Seeing that, he put me into a room on the ground-floor, the windows of which were so low, that a child might have jumped down without the least danger."

“ Well ! ” said J, “ that was giving you a fine opportunity for making your escape.”

—“ Why ! did not I tell you that all the windows had iron-bars to them ? ”

—“ What ! the windows of that country-house ? ”

—“ There is nothing surprising in that,” said Henrietta ; “ she was thus a prisoner.”

“ Certainly,” replied Charlotte ; “ I must have lost my senses, not to have mentioned that before.”

“ So that then,” continued Henrietta, “ you were left destitute of every means of defence ? How did you do then ? ”

—“ Luckily for me, he was taken ill ; and, during that time, as I was allowed a little more liberty, I approached the door of his chamber, and heard him say these words: *In three days, I shall set off for the East-Indies, and carry away Charlotte, making her believe that I will marry her.*”

“ Oh ! my God !” cried Henrietta ; “ how lucky it was, that you came just in time to hear that !”

—“ It was, indeed ! Upon that, seeing that I was not observed, I slipped into one of the avenues of the garden, at the end of which I found a door, which

opened into the fields. Just at that instant, I saw the stage coming up—I entered it, and here I am. But,” added she, not a little out of humor, “it seems that I am come rather unseasonably.”

She had been informed of everything, in her way from the inn to Henrietta’s house. I wanted to vindicate myself—she grew angry—I flew into a passion. Henrietta told me, with tears in her eyes:

“What God has joined together, let none put asunder.”

I protested that we were only betrothed; but Henrietta, always

crying, made me the same answer. Charlotte raved — cried — and, at last, fainted away.

Henrietta wanted to effect a reconciliation—Charlotte recovered—spoke of honor, of friendship, of gratitude—they both joined against me ; and I cannot tell how it was, but, in the course of an hour, they persuaded me that I had promised to marry Charlotte. It was agreed that she should live in Henrietta's house, because she had no where else to go to—and I came home, with my head totally disordered, and not knowing whether I was to marry Henrietta or Charlotte—whether I had

two wives, or none at all. However, I succeeded in collecting my ideas, so far as to tell Peter what had just happened,

"A great consolation, which God is willing to grant you, Sir," said Peter, after musing a considerable time, "is, that you have nothing to reproach yourself with."

"Ah! Peter," cried I, "why does he not grant the same favor to Charlotte?"

"Who knows, Sir?" replied Peter, in the true accent of charity.

—"Peter, do you think...?"

“ Alas ! Sir, who knows ? ” said Peter, as he went out of the room — and I was left in my uncertainty.

It would be needless to observe that I now recollected the kind of presentiment, which had made me lament the impossibility of being married on the septidi, and that I marked it as the ever-fatal day, which had bereaved me of every hope of happiness.

*Chap. XI.***RESTRICTIONS.**

THE next morning, my ideas were a little clearer. I went to Henrietta's, and began to make her some reproaches.

"My good friend," said she, "what God has joined together, let none put asunder."

As she said this, I could perceive her endeavours to check her emotions, and that her eyes were

red with crying. However, I told her that she had pretty soon got over her grief. She answered that she had made a sacrifice of it to God—and, at the same time, she burst into tears. I could not stand it any longer, but told her that I would not marry Charlotte—that I neither would, nor could marry any other than *her*. She then grew angry, and said, that, if I did not marry Charlotte, *she* would go and take the veil in Spain. I now flew into a passion—she did all she could to appease me, and swore she would never be a nun : on this condition, I promised to marry Charlotte ;

and, in fact, since Henrietta could not be my wife, I liked that one just as well as another.

Henrietta's brother came in—he was come back, on account of our marriage. Henrietta had told him every thing, so that he was very much out of temper. He sat down, without saying a word. Charlotte came, and soon saw how much he disliked her; but she did not seem to mind it, and was all attention to him; in short, she managed matters so well, that she completely restored him to good humor. Henrietta was very glad of this; for, she had had a quarrel with her brother about

the marriage, I dined with them. Charlotte and Henrietta's brother were very cheerful. Henrietta and I endeavoured to appear so, as much as we could. In the afternoon, Henrietta's brother went out, and so did I, leaving the two ladies by themselves, between whom the following conversation passed, as I was afterwards informed.

"I did not know your brother," said Charlotte.

—"He is your intended husband's friend."

—"I wonder at that; they do not much resemble one another."

—“No; my brother is not of so good a temper.”

—“He is equally amiable.”

“I know,” replied Henrietta, a little confused, “that my brother is very amiable; but . . .”

—“I do not pretend to say that he is more amiable; yet . . .”

—“Every one has his favorites.”

—“That is what I mean.”

—“My brother, indeed, might possibly succeed better with some persons.”

—“I mean not to say that his friend is not, in general, more successful.”

“The shape of a person makes a great difference,” said Henrietta.

“That would not go against your brother,” replied Charlotte.

—“Certainly not; though your intended has a much more open countenance.”

—“Very true; for, very few people will make the observation that your brother’s is infinitely more noble.”

—“I should think his friend a little taller; but that is no great advantage.”

—“Very possibly; but then your brother is not so lusty: however, that is nothing.”

—“Some things do not strike so well as others, but your intended has got most beautiful teeth.”

—“For the same reason, nobody perhaps will remark that your brother has a much finer leg than he.”

“I am not a connoisseur in those things,” said Henrietta, casting down her eyes—and the conversation dropped. After an interval of some length, Charlotte continued:

—“Is your brother rich?”

—“Not so rich as his friend: his fortune consists in houses.”

—“They are as good as lands
—and much more agreeable.”

—“A landed estate is more
solid: besides, your intended is
very regular; he will manage his
fortune with great advantage.”

—“Your brother seems to en-
joy his in a noble manner.”

—“That is a great merit in
him; though many persons will
say that one should think of the
time to come.”

—“That, indeed, is an excel-
lent observation; though the other
conduct bespeaks a finer charac-
ter.”

—“Nay, but economy is surely
. . . . though I do not mean to

say that my brother is a spend-thrift."

—"It were still worse, if he were a miser; however, I was not speaking about that. After all, it is very natural to enjoy one's fortune."

"If it were wrong," said Henrietta, "it were improper in me to mention it; but, surely, we are not to blame the person that knows how to take care of his property."

"If it were not a virtue," replied Charlotte, "I would never have spoken about it."

"From all which circumstances," said Henrietta, endeavour-

ing to suppress a sigh, "we may conclude that we are both as well as we can wish."

"Exactly so," replied Charlotte. Upon this, I came in, and soon afterwards Henrietta's brother, who said to me :

"It is very unlucky that you could not be married this morning." I made no answer, and he went on :

"The mail is just arrived, with the news of a law having been proposed about a requisition. You know how things are laid hold of here, even before they have passed into a decree. Besides, the Municipal Officer is not your

friend; it will be very unpleasant for you to be obliged to go to the Municipality."

I had been completely disqualified before, being extremely shortsighted; but I was afraid that this would be of no avail. This, therefore, gave me great concern; not that I fly from danger, I had given a proof of my courage in my meeting with my rival; but I am of a peaceable disposition, and all my motions are regulated by rule and compass; therefore, I cannot bear to be put out of my way. In short, I am by no means calculated to be a soldier, and my vocation was rather to be married,

even to Charlotte. Be that as it may, I thought it was better to wait. But, the same evening, a friend of mine came to inform me, that he knew from very good authority that the Municipal Officer had pronounced my name, as he was reading the evening-paper. I was rather startled at this; however, I again endeavoured to be composed. But, the next morning, another person assured me positively, that the wife of the Municipal Officer had said, that the young men should see fine fun. Then I could plainly perceive that I should be obliged to go.

VOCAION WAS LATER TO BE MARRIED

However, I went to carry these tidings to Henrietta. Her brother went out to get further intelligence, and soon came back to tell me that the news appeared but too true. We entered into a long discussion; all this confirmed me in my ideas: Charlotte thought like me, and so did Henrietta's brother; but I believe Henrietta herself was of a different opinion, though she did not like to say so, for fear she should appear less attached to me than the others. In short, I took my leave of them, and happening to have a passport, which I had taken a week before,

upon some occasion which I do not now recollect, I took a place in the stage, and set off for Paris.

*Chap. XII.*THE BASKET.

I ARRIVED just in time to have one of the side places, which, no doubt, are more pleasant and comfortable. Near me sat a man, who, I was informed, was an author. I examined him from head to foot, but could not see any thing very extraordinary in his person. He spoke little, except when he spoke of himself, and

then nobody would listen. The conversation, however, was pretty well supported, and, I must confess, that I was more pleased with it, than with the author's speeches. Nevertheless, I could not bear to see him thus neglected.

When we got again into the coach, after dinner, as I had seen him conversing with a young man, who, I was told, had been travelling with us, except that he was in the basket, I spoke to the author about him, and asked him whether he had known that young man long.

"It is I, Sir," answered he, gravely, "who am known to him."

I observed to him, that the acquaintance must be reciprocal.

"Sir," replied he, with a careless air, "there are people, who, from the solitude they have chosen, know how to get their names repeated by beings who will remain unknown to them for ever."

I understood what he meant—his works, and I told him of my idea——

"Sir," said he, "the monthly publications, which I have filled with my verses, will better answer your question."

I thought he did not think my question civil enough; I had been unlucky, and therefore kept silent.

He now listened, as if somebody had been speaking to him from the outside, and said to me, with some vivacity :

“ Sir, will you be so obliging as to change places with me, for a moment ? ”

I thought he was not comfortable in his own, and, as I am perfectly indifferent about those things, I always make it a practice to take what others refuse : thus, at a ball, I make the ugliest dance, as well as those other ladies whom nobody will take, and this to please the mistress of the house. I, therefore, gave my

place to the author, who immediately put his head out, and, turning his face towards the basket:

“Are you there?” said he. Somebody answered him—he went on. “Have you read those verses upon . . . ?” I could not hear upon what. Probably, he received no answer; for, he repeated the question. We now felt a motion in the coach, which made us judge that the young man was advancing to the edge of the basket. A deep silence ensued—the young man spoke, but we could not hear what he said. Only, the sentence was long, and

it seemed as if he had been reciting verses.

"Yes," said the author, "you have . . ."—and he was interrupted by the jolting of the coach—"you have delivered that extremely well".—"What?" said he, afterwards; for, he seemed to find as much difficulty to hear the young man's speeches, as he found to make himself heard. The lines were repeated, in a louder voice; but we could only hear the word "sublime." The author smiled, with an air of satisfaction, and then went on:

"I would rather advise you to take to the stage." He listened

to the answer, and burst into a fit of laughter. "Very true," said he; "no great theatres"—and, turning to us: "or of those which assume that title"—then put his head out again. The young man was always speaking, the author clapped and laughed by turns. At last, the young man was silent, and the author went on:

"Because"—and here he was forced to stop—"because, as an author as an" He was continually beginning the sentence—then cursing the jolts; indeed, it seemed as if both the coachman and the horses had entered into a conspiracy against our poor

author, and sought the most rugged parts of the road, on purpose to torment him. For the soul of him, he could not proceed in his intended quotation :

“Gentlemen,” said he, turning to us, “what I meant to say is this” But, as he was rather hasty in his motion, his hair caught at something at the top of the coach-window. He merely put his hand to it, and wanted to proceed, in the same posture; but a lady got up, on purpose to disentangle him—every body, now, would lend him assistance—and that made the accident worse—

in short, he lost part of his tou-pee. The compliments that passed on the occasion, the stories which were related, from Absalom down to our poet, so diverted the general attention, that the primary cause was now forgotten, as well as the quotation and the application. He, however, endeavoured to renew the subject, and, indeed, was in a most violent situation. At last, after a whole hour had elapsed, seeing that he could not come to the point by round-about means, he took his resolution, and addressing himself to me:

THE NOW COMING FROM MY NATIVE

"Sir, I was saying to you, that I had written a piece of verses"

"Pray, Sir," interrupted a man, sitting in the opposite corner of the coach, and who had not said any thing before, "do you write verses?"

"Yes, Sir," answered the poet, with an air of self-satisfaction.

—"No doubt, you are a member of some literary society?"

—"I have that honor, Sir; and I can even boast," added he, after having named it, "that I have been of great service to it, as well as to the republic of letters. I am now coming from my native

town, where I had been about a law-suit; and, as I never lose sight of my literary pursuits, I have found means to establish a correspondence between my society and one that is now forming in the town I have just quitted."

"Sir," said the man in the corner, "the multitude of societies of this kind, must contribute in a wonderful manner to the progress of science."

"No doubt of it, Sir. Only be pleased to consider what encouragement that gives to men of letters! Every one is sure that his works shall be read at a public

sitting, and even listened to by a certain number of persons."

"Sir," said the other, "I understand, that, in order to multiply those encouragements, a plan has been proposed for dividing the whole of Paris into societies: this measure will, besides, be attended with a very great advantage, as none will then be tried but by his peers."

The author looked at him—he did not know whether he ought to laugh or be angry. As for me, I could plainly perceive that the man in the corner made game of the author; and, to say the truth, I had suspected as much from the

beginning. They said not a word for the remainder of the journey, and the author did not think proper to recite his verses.

Chap. XIII.

THE COLONNADE OF THE LOUVRE.

I ALIGHTED at the house of an acquaintance. The very next day, they wanted to show me all Paris—I did not like that. I saw very well that they considered me as one of those country bumpkins who are ignorant of every thing, stare at every thing, and will even go and see dogs dance, as if dogs danced better in Paris than any

where else. I told the people of the house that I was naturally lazy and nowise curious, and that, after all, Paris was no more than a city, like any other. They wondered at such an answer, and I could plainly perceive that they had not expected it. They even could hardly prevail upon me to go to the window, and when I gave it as my opinion that the women of Paris were not by far so handsome as those of my own country, they answered, probably to nettles me, that every one that came from the country said the same thing; while the Parisians, when they went into the country,

found it was quite the contrary.

I went to the theatre, but I went by myself — I do not like continual witnesses of my actions. Between the two pieces, I was accosted by one of the persons with whom I lodged.

“Well!” said he, “you find that very fine?”

“Yes,” answered I, with an ironical toss of my head.

—“Why! these are the best actors we have.”

—“I dare say they are. However, I have seen them when they passed through our town.

—“Well! if people are so

eager to see them on their passage, *we* are happier still, by having them here constantly."

"That is as you may think," said I—and I went away, that I might not be forced to find every thing detestable.

There was some exaggeration in all this, I know; but then, as I said before, I do not like to be laughed at. Besides, I have frequently observed, that speaking ill of some persons, is but another way to praise them; and what may serve to prove the justness of the observation is, that it seems pretty generally adopted: else, what motive could in-

duce so many people to depreciate, without any necessity, what others may chance to be possessed of, or to bestow praises on, when it is certain that such disapprobation will give offence, or cause some pain, to the person to whom it is addressed? Now, this is what I never do; for, I should be sorry to deliver any private opinion of mine, when it may hurt the feelings of another, without answering any good.

The next day, I went out with Peter, and, as we came to the colonnade of the Louvre, a countryman of mine passed by me. He recollected me, although he

had been six years in Paris, and had already taken all the manners of the city. He stopped, and began to talk in raptures of that edifice, of which he was taking the greatest pains possible to point out all the beauties. For my part, I must confess that I have not the least knowledge of those things; but, what was more astonishing to me than the colonnade, was the admiration expressed by my countryman, who could not be a better judge than myself, since his parents, who wanted to make him an engineer, had been obliged to give up all thoughts of it, as he had never been

able to learn any thing, either of architecture or of drawing. I saw that he wanted to give himself an air of importance, thinking I was but a mere booby; therefore, I became rather sparing of my encomiums. Peter perceived this, and felt encouraged to deliver his opinion, which was this:

“That is very fine, certainly; but, Sir, with your permission, it is so, only because we come from a great distance to look at it. But, for my part, I’d much rather see our church, which has various pictures, and a saint in every niche, than those columns

which are all alike, and have no meaning at all."

I thought, however, that he went rather too far; so that, after a moment's reflection, I said to him:

"I think, Peter, that is somewhat extraordinary—though, indeed, much may be said on both sides."

My countryman looked at me—I bowed to him—and we parted.

*Chap. XIV.**THE DOG.*

I was returning one evening from a house where I had met nothing but vexation and disappointment. I was walking so fast, that Peter could hardly keep pace with me. At last I stopped:

“Peter,” said I, “I am already sick of Paris.”—Peter made no answer. I went on: “One

meets with very foolish people in it."

"Fortunately, Sir," answered Peter, "it is a very large place."

'To be sure,' thought I, 'it is near three miles from my lodgings to the house where I come from.' But, as a sensible answer is not always what satisfies most, when we are a little out of humor, I continued to walk on, without saying a word.

'Here again,' thought I, 'is another instance of that untoward fate, which has been pursuing me with such an obstinate perseverance. Had the news come

only one mail later (for, I no longer thought of complaining that I had not been able to marry on the octidi, the day when the fatal news arrived: we get used to every thing, and I had familiarised myself so well with this idea, that I now considered it as a fundamental principle): as I was then saying, had the news come by the following mail, we should have reached the decadi: of course, I should have been married—to Charlotte, it is true; but, however, not being obliged to present myself to the Municipality, I should have been quiet at home, and master in my own house, in-

stead of hurrying to this place, where I am forced to walk three tedious miles in quest of disgust and vexation?

I was now near the house where I had taken up my lodgings, when a dog passed by me, running as fast as he was able.—

‘Whither can he run so fast, I wonder?’ said I to myself—and the minute after, he again passed me in the same manner, then began to turn about us, wagging his tail, and howling most piteously. Peter threw him something which he had in his pocket; but the dog would not even smell

at it—he continued howling and wagging his tail.

“’Tis a strayed dog,” said Peter—and, as the dog kept continually looking along the street, on our right, Peter turned his steps that way. The dog followed him, with demonstrations of joy; but, when they came to the end of the street, he stopped, and renewed his lamentations. Peter turned to the left—it was all the same; at last, they again found themselves—before me. The dog seemed more perplexed than ever; Peter was not the less so—they were looking at one another.

"Poor thing!" said Peter, stooping down, and patting his head; "if thou could but speak!"—the dog set up a most piteous howling. Peter, probably, thought that this fresh expression of despair was owing to his situation being again brought before his eyes. "However," continued he, always caressing him, "every thing here is for the best:"—and, as the dog did not seem inclined to yield to this argument: "Who knows?" said Peter, getting up again.

Had any other person been present, and heard what Peter was

saying, he would, no doubt, have thought that Peter was calling in question what he had advanced the moment before. But, for my part, I was certain that he had been answering the dog, and not himself. However, as I saw that he had no other consolations to offer, I told him that we must go in. Peter invited the dog to do the same—the dog refused, and we shut the door.

“Poor thing!” cried Peter, a second time, as soon as we had entered the apartment. “However,” continued he, “thank God, the weather is not cold.”

“Peter,” said I, “in a country-town, a dog would not thus pass the night in the street.”

“Fortunately,” returned Peter, fetching a sigh, “they are more used to it in Paris.”

—“Probably, because that is more frequently the case with them.”

—“Or, perhaps, the contrary, Sir; else, they would mind it more than they do.”

“Well then, Peter,” cried I, “you think they are reasonable beings?”

“Ah! Sir,” replied Peter, “what God keeps is well kept!”

I immediately thought of Charlotte, and one may reasonably suppose that this did not contribute to put me into a better humor.

“Peter,” said I, resuming the subject, “it is very certain that, in a country-town, the master and his dog would be instantly known.”

—“Yes, Sir; but, should the dog bark, they would know that it is your dog, and say: that is the one we are to beat.”

“Peter,” returned I, “which is best?”

“Why, Sir,” answered Peter, after reflecting a considerable time,

"Paris is Paris, and a country-town is a country-town."

I also reflected upon this answer of Peter's, and found that there was more sense in it than one might be inclined to think.

*Chap. XV.***THE CROWN-PIECE.**

THE next day, I forgot all my troubles, and resolved to write to Henrietta, according to the permission she had granted me. But, when I sat down to my desk, I found myself at a loss how to begin. This again put me out of humor—three times did I begin the letter, and, when I had finished it, I found that it was too late

to put it into the office, at that end of the town—I never liked to trust the postman; so that I carried it myself to the general post.

As I was putting my letter in, I saw two young ladies approaching the box. I was struck with the air of preoccupation which was visible on their countenances. They were dressed alike, and quite plain. One of them held in her hand a large packet, which she was ready to drop into the box; the other saw that I was looking at her—she also looked at me—and stopped her sister. They seemed to consult one another

with their eyes: at last, she that held the packet turned round, as if to address me. She hesitated a moment—then said, blushing exceedingly deep:

“ Pray, Sir, do the letters always go safe by post ?”

—“ Almost always.”

“ Almost ?” said the other—she looked at her sister, and both seemed more irresolute, and more perplexed than before. As I was wholly taken up with my observations, I had answered them without much minding the purport of the question. I wished to repair my fault, but I could find nothing to say; which is always

the case, when I want to speak.

At last, the younger sister said to me:

"Then, Sir, letters are lost sometimes?"

—"Yes; but that happens very seldom."

"But it *does* happen," returned she, with an air of impatience. She turned again to her sister, and both, a second time, remained silent.

"There is a way, however," said I, "which is pretty safe, and that is, to get the letters registered."

"Ah!" cried she, joy flashing

in her eyes; "where can I do that?"

"There," said I, pointing to the office. "But, before that, you must go to the porter, who will put three seals on your letter."

"I am much obliged to you," said she—and she was going. I stopped her: "You must pay him some money," added I—they look at each other. "Make haste," said I again; "the office shuts at two o'clock." They again thanked me, and entered the porter's lodge.

A moment after, I saw them coming out, and hastily running

across the yard. I stopped, in order to see them return : not that I am naturally curious, but, in reality, I would have given a great deal to have known the contents of the packet. I did not wait long—they came back with the same precipitation, and again entered the porter's lodge.

“ Sir,” said the elder, “ you might render us a most essential service. We are entire strangers to you,” added she ; “ and, therefore, shall not be surprised if you should refuse us—Would you lend us five shillings for half an hour ?”

The porter seemed at a loss what to answer—“ Why”

said he, looking about him, "I don't know whether I have as much really I believe I have not got five shillings"—and he went out into the yard, as if he had been in a great hurry, and wanted to look for somebody.

"'Tis very natural," said she blushing, "you do not know who we are"—and they also went out, without the least appearance of bad humor, but walking very slowly; and, after the first moment was over, they resumed the same air of timidity which I had, at first, remarked in their whole behaviour. They durst not look

at the porter, when they passed him—perhaps also, because he had not acted by them as well as I wished they had asked me, although they were as perfect strangers to me as they might be to the porter. I would have lent them the five shillings—and yet, though not a miser, still I do not like to throw away my money, nor to run the chance of losing it, by trusting persons whom I do not know to be perfectly safe. All these reflections I had made almost at the very same instant; for, the young ladies now passed before me, and curtsied without saying a

word. I was really sorry for it, but I durst not approach them.

They had not gone far, when I heard the younger say: "come, let us go;" as if she had been adopting a last resource—and both instantly set off as fast as ever they were able. I was following them into the street, when the clock struck two!!! They stopped—the elder clasped her hands together—I was always advancing.

"It will not go to-day, then!" cried the younger, in a tone of despair—the elder let fall her hands.

At this instant, I turned my head and saw the postman taking the

letters out of the box. This was the moment for me to come forward—I was going to pass over every consideration, when I felt that I had left my purse in the coat which I had on the day before ! I stopped—I was going away, as if afraid of seeing them—then came back again, as if wanting to receive consolations from them. They were still on the same spot—the younger said something, at which the elder made a sudden motion of her hand ; their eyes instantly surveyed both sides of the street, and they precipitately entered a shoe-

maker's shop, opposite the general post-office.

"See," said the elder, taking out of her pocket a case, containing two knives with mother-of-pearl handles: "can you lend us five shillings upon this, for half-an-hour?"

The shoemaker's wife was hesitating—

"The blade is pure gold," hastily added the young lady, drawing one of the knives half out of the case—the other smiled, and gave her a crown-piece. They sprung out of the shop, and re-entered the court-yard of the post-office.

As for me, I stood leaning against the door of the shop, almost mad that I had not thought of my watch. With slow steps, I crossed the street—I could not think of leaving the office, without knowing whether the letter should go or not. I soon perceived the young ladies coming; their countenance expressed the most lively satisfaction. They entered the porter's lodge, and paid him what they owed for his three seals. He muttered a few words, with an air of confusion, and repulsed with his hand the money they were offering. They, then, simply put it upon the table,

where the porter left it—and, blushing, dropped a courtesy.

When they came out, I could perceive in their eyes a little air of triumph—and I thought it very natural. I had now nothing to do, but to go away—every thing had taken such an unlucky turn for me, that I ought not to wish that they should see me. Yet, I did not like the idea of their going, without letting them know that I was there; though, in all this, I could not appear much to advantage, as they could not guess that I was without any money. It was then that I felt a lively sensa-

tion of regret that I had not thought of my watch.

While I stood considering what I was to do, they passed by, and looking at me, courtesied with a most charming air. They wore no longer those thoughtful, wearisome figures, which they exhibited at first. They looked at me for some time, and seemed as if they wished to stop and speak to me. However, as I was not certain of it, I durst not advance, and, at the moment when I felt my courage revive, they turned their heads, and went away.—
‘ Well, well,’ said I, ‘ I must

not think of it any more.' As I was making this reflection, they again looked at me. I did not expect it—this encouraged me, and I went up to them—they guessed at my intention, and slackened their pace.

"Well!" said I, "your letter will go?"

"Yes," answered the elder, with the smile of happiness.

—"That porter, who refused to . . ."

—"It was very natural; we were strangers to him."

"And I," continued I, "who had left my purse at home?"

They, probably, believed me; for, they answered by an obliging smile.

"That moment was terrible!" said the younger, whose emotions had not entirely subsided.

—"But now you are very happy?"

"Happy!" cried she, with an air of surprise; and she cast a look of sorrow on her sister.

"But," said I, "is not the letter to go?"

"Yes," answered the elder; *that* is to-day's happiness"—the smile had vanished, and I thought I perceived the traces of the preceding day's affliction.

—“And to-morrow?”

—“To-morrow, the day after to-morrow, cannot be days of happiness.” Their eyes filled with tears—I durst not pronounce another word, and, with a slight inclination of their heads, they left me. I followed at a distance. They were met by a person of their acquaintance—they stopped. The person listened, with an air of surprise and affliction. “It is since yesterday,” said the younger—then, she uttered the word *prison*, which thrilled through all my veins—I had, myself, been six months in prison. A movement, which I cannot even now

account for, hurried me towards them—the other person was just going away.

“In prison?” I asked. Their downcast eyes returned the answer. “For the requisition?” added I, in a low voice.

“He is no longer a young man,” answered the elder, looking up with a smile—which vanished in an instant. I was ashamed to think that she had penetrated my idea, and, with some confusion, said: “It is to be hoped. . . .”

“He was once confined eleven months,” interrupted the younger,

"and we had been hoping from the first day."

"If he do not deserve . . .," said I—a look from her put a stop to my sentence, it seemed to say that I was guilty of a sacrilege.

"Will people acknowledge that they have been deceived? Can a man escape calumny?"

"Calumny," slowly continued the elder, "meditates and combines its proofs, while innocence has not even thought of collecting its own." Her eyes remained fixed on the ground. We all stood silent, and without thinking of leaving the spot.

"Henrietta," said, at last, the elder.

"Is your name Henrietta?" I exclaimed, addressing the younger.

—There are certain moments when every thing contributes to raise emotions. "I have," said I, "a friend, whose name is Henrietta"—and the recollection brought tears to my eyes.

"I am very glad of it," said she, with a soft expression of sadness. Our eyes again held a converse—but for the last time. The sisters went away—I durst not follow. Why did I not think of my watch? If I had, I should have been their friend for ever.

I related to Peter every thing that had happened. My imagination continually presented to me, a whole family in consternation, perpetually falling from the agitations of hope into the pangs of fear; an unfortunate man, exhausted, suffering, absorbed in the calm of despair.

“Rather think, Sir,” said Peter, “of the moment when he shall be released.”——The contrast was much too striking; it brought to my mind still more painful recollections.

—“Ah! Peter, who can tell when that moment will come? Besides, I shall not know it—I

shall not see them any more. Oh! had I but thought of my watch!"

"Sir," said Peter, "perhaps you have saved yourself a long train of sorrows"—and this answer of Peter's only served to increase my sadness. Yet, I could not say, as I had many times before: "why did I come to Paris?"

*Chap. XVI.**A NEW QUARREL.*

I SPENT three weeks at Paris; and then received a letter from Henrietta, informing me that the Municipal, who was my enemy, was no longer in office; that, besides, there was a great talk about peace, and consequently, that I had no longer any thing to fear. I resolved to return home—took leave of my friends, and arrived without any accident.

I found Charlotte in her apartment; Henrietta's brother was sitting by her side. She uttered a scream, when she saw me, and got up, quite red with emotion and surprise—which I attributed to the pleasure she felt at my return. I ought to have been grateful for it; but I found that impossible—My whole thoughts were still on Henrietta. I had her good day—she asked me how I did—and we sat down, in as great embarrassment as if we had never seen each other. Henrietta's brother left the room, to go and inform his sister of my arrival.

I was sitting opposite to Charlotte—her eyes were bent upon her work : as for me, I was now-and-then coughing, and perpetually turning about upon my chair. I knew very well that I must speak to her about our marriage ; but, although this is a thing which may be considered under many different points of view, yet I found it impossible to stop at one single idea which I could express. At last I said :

“ Well, Charlotte ! I believe it is the day after to-morrow that we are to be married.” This was on octidi.

“ I suppose so,” said she, with-

out taking her eyes off her work. I was not in a very good humor—I did not like this answer.

“Suppose!” returned I, “one would think that you are not quite sure that you wish it.”

—“I must: who would have me, now that my reputation is lost?”

—“Charlotte, is it *I* who have most contributed to it?”

“Who is it then?” replied she angrily, “after what I have done for you.”

—“It seems you have not done much less for my rival.”

—“Your rival? he carried me off—the case is very different.”

"Who knows?" replied I—Charlotte instantly flew into a most terrible passion about these words, which I had uttered without meaning any offence; for, I knew very well that I must, at last, take my chance, and then, it would be of no use to be wrangling about words. Be that as it may, Charlotte grew angry—I was not disposed to make any excuses—Henrietta came in, as we were quarreling, and Charlotte went out in a transport of rage.

"Well!" said I to Henrietta, "we have already been quarreling."

—"Already?"

“And you are very sorry for it?” continued I, in order to sound her sentiments.

“I must,” answered she, without raising her eyes.

“I knew that,” returned I, in a tone of anger.

—“What? what is it you knew?”

—“That you were very glad of this marriage.”

“I must,” said she, a second time: but her voice trembled, and, as she spoke, I could perceive that she was ready to cry. Nevertheless, as I wanted her to be more explicit, I assumed a still greater appearance of anger at her

reply. Then, indeed, she burst into tears.

"What would you have me do, then?" said she.

"That you should not be so glad of this marriage," replied I, putting my arm round her waist.

—"You know very well that I am not."

"Yes," said I, while, in spite of her resistance, I imprinted a kiss on her lovely cheek; "but I wanted you to say so."

She smiled—then continued, saying: "But, what is the use of it, since you marry Charlotte?"

—“If you would but . . .”

—“Nay; but are you not betrothed?”

—“Yes; but that is next to nothing.”

She shook her head—I intreated her for a whole hour—I used every argument I could think of—she made no answer, but continued crying still more bitterly. At last, she turned to me, and said, with such a soft tone, that I can still now bear the recollection:

“My good friend, by the love you feel for me, I intreat you not to go on any longer in that way

—it only serves to make me miserable. Now," said she, while tears flowed fast down her cheeks, and bending her head upon her knees, where her handkerchief was, "ever since Charlotte has been here, I have done nothing but crying every night. Yesterday, I went to my confessor—I spoke of nobody but you." Here I thought she was going to be smothered—I pressed her hands between mine—I was myself in a state impossible to be described. She went on: "The father told me—yes, indeed, he told me that there was no sin in

ic, if I could not really help it; but that I should endeavour to get the better of my passion. At the same time, he told me that I ought not to oppose the laudable intention you manifested, of repairing the scandal you had occasioned, and the injury which you had done to Charlotte's reputation. Thus, you see that it cannot be otherwise." Then she rose up, and leaned against the back of her chair. As for me, I paced the apartment to and fro, as if I had been raving mad. All on a sudden, I fell on my knees, in the middle of the room

—I clasped my hands together, and pressed them with all the strength I was able.

“Henrietta! Henrietta,” I exclaimed, without even hearing what I said, “it is I intreat you not to go on any longer in that way, or you will make me frantic.” Then I put my head between my hands—I no longer knew where I was. Henrietta was frightened—she came to me, conjured me to rise, to sit down—she also sat down by me, tried to comfort me—did not repulse, or perhaps, did not mind some innocent freedoms, which I thought

I might take. At last, when she saw that I was a little composed, she said:

“Go home; Charlotte would not know what to think, if she were to see you in that situation: but promise that to-morrow you will be reconciled to her.”

I felt myself so weak, in every respect, that I could not have resisted even a child. I went home, in an agony of sorrow. To ease my chagrins, I related them to Peter, and began calculating, as I had done before, all the misfortunes which had befallen me in the course of a few

months. The poor fellow did not know what to say ; only, now-and-then, he shrugged up his shoulders, saying :

“ Still it is very well that it is no worse.”

“ But, Peter,” returned I, “ I do not see how it could well be worse.”

Peter answered by another shrug, as much as to say: ‘ Who knows, Sir ?’ though he durst not pronounce it, for fear I should be angry at him — which, indeed, I could not have done, on account of this attention.

I passed the whole night in tormenting myself—and I *fancied*

that Henrietta was crying on her part, which seemed to afford me some consolation, although I could not bear the sight of her tears. The next day, I went to her house early, and told her how I had spent the night. I asked whether she had done the same.

“Yes,” answered she; “but I believe I have done wrong; for, I fear I have not endeavoured to get the better of my passion.” I wanted to kiss her hand; but she gently repulsed me, saying: “Go to Charlotte—we must not repeat the scene of yesterday.”

I went to Charlotte, and found her calm, as had always been the

case, for some time past, every time that we had had a quarrel—and this, I must say, is what vexes me more than any thing else. I always like to come to an explanation; but, if one looks at me with any degree of good-nature, then I can no longer speak my mind, and I am sure that my passion will be over, without my having been able to unburthen my heart. Be that as it may, I sat down by her. As chance would have it, I cast my eyes on an almanack—it reminded me that we were on the eve of the decadi. I instantly began to think: ‘if I do not lay hold of this oppor-

tunity, which I have already missed nine times, most probably it will never happen again, and, with Henrietta's resolution, I may chance never to be married.' Besides, every thing had been ready a long while—Charlotte was there—and so was I—it was but a step to the Municipality. After making all these reflections, I said :

“ Well ! Charlotte, to-morrow is the day ? ”

“ As you please,” answered she ; but it was in a tone so different from that which she had assumed the day before, that she appeared no longer the same person. I represented to her that she could

not accuse me of having occasioned any impediment to it, and that she had been saying to me very unpleasant things, without any provocation.

“How is it possible for me not to be uneasy,” answered she, “when I think of all that has happened to me, and above all, when you load me with reproaches which I have not deserved?”

I would not remind her that the reproaches had not been made till after the event—we were soon reconciled, and every thing was settled for the next day. Afterwards, we began to speak of the commencement of our amours: Char-

lotte seemed to be sincere in her affection—I was softened, and almost fancied that I still felt my former passion. After all, Charlotte was pretty enough to raise in me such feeling recollections. I was very angry at myself, when I afterwards thought of Henrietta's chagrin—but I am relating facts.

I had Charlotte's hand between mine, when Henrietta entered the apartment. The blood ran up to my face—Henrietta took no notice of it. Her brother soon arrived—we told him of our projects; he seemed rather sad, and I observed that he was continually looking at Charlotte, who avoid-

ed meeting his eyes. I was pleased with her reserve—she could even perceive it, by a sign which I made her.

I spent part of the day with them: in the evening, I left them for about an hour, and, when I came back, Henrietta's brother no longer looked at Charlotte—he did not even seem to take any notice of her. I imagined that she had been making him some remonstrances. In a word, I supposed every thing that was capable of contributing to render my situation anywise agreeable. I even went so far as to assume an air of contentment, by singing all the

way to my house. I took care, however, not to begin, till I was far enough not to be heard by Henrietta.

When I came home, Peter remarked that I was very cheerful. Out of regard to myself, I would not tell him any thing to the contrary, and I ordered him to get every thing ready early the next morning.

"You may make yourself easy," said he, with an air of satisfaction. Peter had nothing so much at heart as to see me married.

*Chap. XVII.**THE PREPARATIONS.*

THE next morning, when Peter came into my room, a full half hour before the time, his head was already dressed and powdered, a thing he had not done, since the day when I was to have been married for the first time. I made this remark, and also recollected that this was *decadi*. This produced recollections without num-

ber, every one of which was a dagger to my heart, and added to my sadness — so far, that I had not yet finished dressing, when I threw myself upon a chair, with folded arms, and in the deepest state of despondence.

“ Peter,” said I, fetching a deep sigh, “ what a difference !”

My eyes filled with tears—Peter saw it—this was not a time for him to ‘ thank God.’ But, faithful to his principles, he only changed the form of his speech.

“ The other, Sir,” said he, “ was the first of your misfortunes ; this is the last.”

“ Ah ! Peter, who knows ?”

cried I, and instantly rising from the chair, I began to pace the room in great agitation, that I might not sink under my weakness. Peter looked at me and spoke not a word; but he looked in such a manner that he seemed to speak. I stopped, at last, and said, in a low voice:

“What makes me so miserable *to-day*, seemed *then* to be the height of felicity.”

“Which shows,” said Peter, while he was brushing my coat, “that man never knows what he would have.”

—“Well! Peter, suppose he did?”

—At this moment, I recollected all the sorrows which Charlotte had caused me, and which did not hinder me from marrying her. I could not persuade myself that it was for my advantage: but I did not say to Peter what I thought—it was of no use, and would only have given him pain—which would have been the more wrong in me, as, notwithstanding the desire he had to see me married, he felt a sincere concern at my sadness.

—“Who knows, Sir?”

In misfortune, the least thing will depress, but the least thing will revive. These words produced

upon me the effect of a prophecy—and, indeed, I had been, for some months past, such a striking instance of the caprices of fortune, that now, not one could possibly have been found, of so extraordinary a nature, as to make me reject the thought of it as unreasonable. I went out rather more composed, and met Henrietta muffled up in a large cloak. She seemed to wish to avoid me; but I had not the courage to second her intentions. I asked her whether she was going.

“I shall be back soon,” said she, without answering my question. She smiled a “good b’ye,”

and I thought I saw her eyes were red. I turned to Peter, who was following me.

"Peter," said I, "I cannot conceive where Henrietta can go to, at such an early hour."

"Thank God! Sir," answered Peter, "*that* no longer concerns you."

"Peter," replied I, rather hastily, "I am not uneasy about *that*; I shall never suspect Henrietta of doing any thing that is wrong."

"God be praised, then," cried Peter, with tears in his eyes, "that he has also saved you that trouble!"

I made no answer. I had not gone far, when I met Henrietta's servant-girl. We had become acquainted, while I went every day to visit her mistress. I accosted her and enquired, without seeming to know any thing about it, whether Henrietta was gone out.

"Yes," said she, with a mysterious air.

"Where is she gone to, so very early?" continued I—not that it gave me the least uneasiness. The girl approached me, and whispered in my ear:

"She is gone to church, to receive the sacrament."

"To-day? then she will not

be present at . . . the wedding?" cried I, with some hesitation; and, to say the truth, I did not know whether it gave me pleasure or pain.

"That is what I told her," returned the girl. "On the contrary, answered my mistress: it is a holy ceremony, and I shall be better prepared to attend."

My heart was ready to burst. I looked at the servant for some time—I wished to ask her: 'How did she say that?' but I had not the courage. After waiting awhile, seeing that I did not say any thing else, and that I was continually opening and shutting my eyes, to

prevent their filling with tears, the servant gave a wink to Peter—shrugged up her shoulders and went away. I was hardly able to proceed. Still another piece of news like this, and I am sure I should never have arrived. At last, I found myself at the door.

*Chap. XVIII.**THE WEDDING.*

I ENQUIRED for Charlotte; instead of answering, they gave me a letter. Although I could not, seemingly at least, experience a misfortune more cruel, than that to which I had submitted, but not resigned myself, yet a cold shivering ran through all my veins. At length, I opened the letter, and read as follows :

“ I am setting off with the brother of Henrietta. I was born to be the sport of the many chances which a single day may produce. One single day's delay has once more changed my fate. Yesterday morning, I was still determined to marry you : but yesterday evening, I could not resist the passion, the grief which he manifested at losing me. He is greatly in love with me, and I believe you will not be sorry to break all connexion with me ; therefore, we cannot but be both gainers by the event. I wish you every prosperity you can enjoy, and am go-

ing to a country whence you will never hear from

CHARLOTTE."

I was thunderstruck at the contents of this letter—I gave it to Peter.

"God be praised!" cried I, sooner than he, surprise had taken such possession of his faculties—and, without reflecting on what I was going to do, I flew like lightning to the place where Henrietta was. I met her as she was coming back—I seized her hand with transport—

"Are you mad?" said she—I showed her the letter—"You are still betrothed," said she, as she

returned it me—but she faintly pronounced the words, and, notwithstanding her bonnet, I could perceive that her eyes spoke not the language of her mouth.

“Go, and wait for me, at my house,” said she, without allowing me time to reply—and again entered the place she had just left. I made no doubt that she was going to ask advice, and, though I knew very well what would be the result, yet expectation was insupportable. It did not last long; I had hardly entered the house, when I perceived her through the window, almost running towards me.

“Still betrothed,” said she, as she

I flew to meet her——

“Well?” cried I.

“You must not talk about that to-day,” said she, turning her head from me, in order to conceal a smile, which, in spite of all her efforts, escaped her lips. I embraced her with transport, and that several times, notwithstanding she was continually repeating: “You must not talk of that to-day.”

I sat down by her, and immediately began to talk of *that*. She was listening for some time, without answering—then she was saying a word—and then again repeating:

"But, upon my word, it were better not to talk of that to-day."

At length, she cast off that painful restraint, and promised to be mine, whatever might happen hereafter. My happiness was complete——

"Henrietta," said I, "we are betrothed."

"No," answered she, "that is not sufficient to make me easy."

I was mad for joy—I fell on my knees—got up—laughed without being conscious of it—I said to her:

"You have been consulting him, Henrietta?"

"Yes," answered she, "and he has congratulated me from the bottom of his heart—The other day," added she, "he could not help shedding some tears with me."

At this moment, he entered the room—he was coming to wish us joy. Never did I see a figure more respectable. His sacred character obliged him to lament the errors of Charlotte, but he did not go beyond the limits of his office, and without difficulty dropped that subject, to speak of a more pleasing one.

"I would not talk of *that* to-

day," said Henrietta to him, not so much to make an excuse, as to ask a question. The holy man smiled, and Henrietta found herself perfectly at ease.

I would not delay till the evening to impart my happiness to Peter. I found him in the house, waiting for me.

"Peter," said I——

"I told you so, Sir," answered Peter—I would not add a word more. If he had pronounced: "Who knows, Sir?" I should have thought that the whole edifice of my felicity was tumbling into ruins. I pressed his hand—

and went in again to Henrietta.

Although I sighed after the moment which was to unite us, yet the decade passed to me like lightning. Still, I could not help feeling a kind of superstitious fear, at the near approach of a felicity, a further delay to which I should never have been able to bear; but I had now exhausted all possible chances. The decadi came; we were married, with all the necessary ceremonies; and Peter, who no longer knew how to improve upon my thanksgivings, exclaimed, in a sudden transport of joy:

"God be praised, that he has made the decadi !"

I was struck at these words ; the impression which my misfortunes had made upon my mind, had not yet allowed me sufficient time to reconcile myself to this idea. Nevertheless, on my looking at Henrietta, who was gently pressing my hand, and on reflecting upon what had happened, I saw the uncertainty of things in this world, and that of human judgements. I imparted this reflection to Peter.

"Peter," said I, "who could have known it?"

"Sir," answered Peter, "Providence orders every thing for the best."

"Peter," said I, "who could have thought it?"

THE END.

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